

This is the second part of Scott Hays's testimony. Part Two

The next thing I remember was waking up and laying in a strange bed with my arm in a full cast. I got a little notoriety a couple days later when my photo appeared in the local newspaper, I had regular visits from school friends, and I especially remember that the male sixth grade teacher at my school (already a hero of mine, even if I wouldn't be in sixth grade for four more years) brought me an entire box of baseball card bubble gum. I didn't do much more of the second grade, although I did enough to be promoted to third. The next couple of years I was in and out of the hospital for corrective surgeries and for what passed as physical therapy in those days. A lot of the surgeries took place during the summer (to minimize loss of more school), so there went my baseball career (along with almost all other sports). My doctor performed some rather revolutionary surgical techniques (for the day) and was able to stretch the tendons from my wrist to my fingers so I could use the ones I had left, but my wrist is still immobile. I lost the pinky finger on my dominant right hand, as well, and still have rather distinctive scars on both sides of my wrist where the .45 caliber bullet entered and exited my hand. Somehow, I had managed to turn away from my friend before the gun fired (or in the split second after it fired), and the bullet entered my right shoulder in the back, exited the shoulder at the front, re-entered my hand at the wrist near the thumb, and then tore away most of the outside of my hand when it exited at the pinkie.

Besides the obvious deformity left by the wound and the lack of any wrist motion, my right arm is now several inches shorter than my left. Most of my life I was extremely self-conscious regarding the arm's appearance and people's reactions to it, especially when I did something simple like shake their hand. It has taken me most of my life to adjust to those reactions, but I can honestly say that for about the last twenty years, it hasn't bothered me too much. There are many things I cannot do as well as I would like, of course, but I have learned how to compensate pretty well and today people often express surprise to learn that I have a gunshot wound. Mostly, though, my biggest concern is that the wound is now afflicted with arthritis and is at times quite painful. Other than those issues, however, I have no complaints ... and have even had a drink with the friend who shot me at our high school 50th reunion.

None of this — the trauma, the adjustments, the pain, the limitations — would have taken place, of course, if HB 2510 had been in place. I think that statement speaks for itself, and I hope you seriously consider my story when you vote on this bill. I am not alone, and I am pretty sure almost all victims of gun violence will agree.

Respectfully submitted
Scott Hays
Oregon City